

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claim 1 has been amended to require the sizing composition to be an aqueous composition and the epoxy resin to be water-dispersible or water-emulsifiable. Support for these amendments exists, *inter alia*, at page 5, lines 7-23, and the examples.

The remaining claims have been amended to place them into better condition for examination.

New claim 19 is directed to specific hardeners formerly in claim 6.

New claim 20 requiring the size composition to be sprayable is supported, *inter alia*, at page 9, line 17 et seq.

Claims 1-20 are currently pending in the application.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-4 and 6-9 under 35 U.S.C § 102 as anticipated by U.S. patent 6,329,473 (“Marten”), claim 5 under 35 U.S.C § 103 as obvious over Marten, and claims 10-18 under 35 U.S.C § 103 as obvious over U.S. patent 5,968,645 (“Caccini”) in view of Marten. In view of the following comments, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Marten discloses epoxy resins which are not aqueous. Accordingly, Marten cannot teach or suggest the claimed aqueous size compositions.

All of the components of Marten’s resins (A through D) are solid or liquid; however, they all contain no water. This failure is highlighted in Marten’s examples (1-11) and Table 3 in which the epoxy resin (A) is obtained by reacting a liquid amine (Novamin® N 40, Primene® 81 R) with a liquid polyoxyalkylene glycol diglycidyl ether (Beckopox® EP 075, Beckopox® EP 140, Grilonit® RV 1812) or a solid polyoxyalkylene glycol diglycidyl ether

(Beckopox® EP 301) with a liquid hardener to obtain a liquid resin.¹ Given these preparation procedures, it would be clear to one of ordinary skill in the art that Marten's resins do not contain water.

Furthermore, Marten's compositions are used for different purposes than the claimed sizing compositions and, accordingly, have different properties/constituents. For example, sizing compositions are sprayed onto fibers while hot, generally in a fiber-receiving hopper beneath burners generating a gas stream. Therefore, sizing compositions cannot have significant amounts of flammable organic solvents and/or contamination in the hopper (see, page 2, lines 4-12 of the present application). Accordingly, Marten's compositions which are used for completely different purposes and have different properties and/or constituents would not have been appropriate for use as sizing compositions. This is particularly true for new claim 20 which requires the composition to be sprayable -- Marten's compositions contain too much solid matter which, inevitably, would lead to clogged nozzles of spraying devices.

For all of the above reasons, Marten by itself cannot teach or suggest the present invention.

Caccini does not compensate for Marten's deficiencies. Although Caccini relates to sizing compositions, Caccini does not teach or suggest the claimed sizing compositions including, in particular, the required accelerator, and nothing in Caccini would motivate one of ordinary skill in the art to completely change Marten's compositions (that is, to disregard Marten's disclosure) to prepare an aqueous sizing composition for spraying onto fibers, particularly given the high solid content of Marten's compositions and/or the flammability/contamination associated with such compositions.

¹ Product data sheets for Primene® 81 R, Beckopox® EP 075, Beckopox® EP 140, Beckopox® EH 610, Beckopox® EH 624, and Grilonit® RV 1812 are attached as Tab A.

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In view of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103.

Applicants believe that the present application is in condition for allowance. Prompt and favorable consideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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